

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

ORDER NO. R2-2002-0109

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SOLANO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE STATE WATER POLLUTION CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ACCOUNT FOR WATER VULNERABILITY STUDY IN SOLANO COUNTY

Whereas, Solano County Department of Environmental Management on September 23, 2002, submitted a proposal to apply for funding from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) to conduct a study of water supply vulnerability related to existing contaminant plumes;

Whereas, Section 13442 of the California Water Code states that upon application by a public agency with authority to clean up waste or abate the effects thereof, the State Board may order moneys to be paid from the CAA to the agency to assist it in cleaning up the waste or abating its effect on waters of the State;

Whereas, Solano County is located in a rural area that consists of small metropolis communities primarily surrounded by agricultural land and where older industrialized areas throughout the County contain shallow water supply wells that are not being maintained or regulated by Department of Health Services. As of July 2002, approximately 450 sites with contaminated groundwater were identified throughout the County. Leaking underground storage tanks account for the largest number of these sites. Other significant types of discharges that have contaminated groundwater include leaking above ground storage tanks, spills, solvent leaks from dry cleaners, and leaking sanitary sewer lines. Over one-third of the impacted sites in the County are located in communities that utilize groundwater as sole-source potable water supply for municipal, domestic, irrigation, and industrial purposes.

Whereas, wastes including petroleum hydrocarbons, solvents, and metals have been released over time throughout Solano County and have impacted shallow groundwater that is utilized for irrigation, drinking and municipal water purposes. Constituents within the released wastes such as motor vehicle fuel contain chemicals that are known or suspected to be human carcinogens. Many of these constituents such as benzene and MtBE have a low taste and odor threshold and therefore degrade water quality. Water samples collected from supply wells within Solano County have reported concentrations of benzene up to 50,000 parts per billion (ppb) and MtBE up to 1,900,000 ppb. Over 2,000 shallow water supply wells exist near impacted sites that are not regulated after well installation. Because agencies that oversee well installations do not track impacted sites, water supply wells are being permitted and installed on or near impacted sites. Many of these wells are installed for irrigation and domestic purposes and therefore are

not regulated or required to be tested by Department of Health Services or other well permitting agencies after installation. Given the number of impacted sites and non-regulated water supply wells throughout the County, the potential for future cross-contamination of deep drinking water aquifers is high;

Whereas, currently, impacted sites and the installation of water supply wells throughout Solano County are regulated by several different local, state, and federal agencies; however, after installation, the status of domestic, irrigation, and other small water supply wells is not regulated. Therefore, no mechanisms are in place to ensure that contaminated sites will not impact these non-regulated water supply wells. Because the status of the water supply wells is not tracked, impacted sites located near wells are not properly prioritized for cleanup, or wells are being installed in or near highly contaminated areas;

Whereas, Solano County staff will perform the work to initiate a County-wide inter-agency tracking and notification system for existing contaminant plumes and water supply wells. Components will include development of guidelines, well destruction or abandonment, coordination among oversight agencies, and integration of existing databases. This system will be used to prioritize and accelerate site remediation and to track the permitting and status of water supply wells throughout the County. As new contaminant sources are discovered, the existence of a functioning well tracking system will facilitate notification and timely abatement;

Whereas, The SCDEM study will have direct benefits for the Regional Board's groundwater protection efforts in Solano County, by identifying high-priority groundwater plumes for remediation, and elsewhere in the San Francisco Bay Region, by providing a template for similar work in other counties. The SCDEM study will have additional benefits for other Regional Boards and the State Board, by identifying regulatory oversight issues and possible solutions;

Whereas, this Regional Board is responsible for ensuring that present and potential beneficial uses applicable to the main groundwater basins in the Region are protected from the pollution and nuisance that may occur as a result of waste discharges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, hereby supports Solano County Department of Environmental Management requesting \$99,800 from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account for a study to evaluate water supply vulnerability and implement a County-wide inter-agency tracking and notification system for existing contaminant plumes and water supply wells.

I, Loretta K. Barsamian, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on October 16, 2002


Loretta K. Barsamian
Executive Officer